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REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES.

Ueber Herkunft und Sprache der transgangetischen Völker. Festrede . . . gehalten . . . 25 July, 1881, von ERNST KUHN. München, 1883. 4to, pp. 22.

This is an interesting paper, and worthy of attention for its relations both to its special theme and to certain points in the general study of language upon which it touches. The author introduces his subject by pointing out the natural *nexus* of interest which leads us on from the institutions of India to their extension over neighboring parts of the earth, and then to matters concerning the older history of the populations to whom they were communicated. A consideration of the geographical conditions of Further India shows him that the history of emigration in that peninsula is governed by the river-courses; and he assumes that the successive waves of population will have followed one another downward from the central uplands of the interior, each driving its predecessor to the lowest coast-line, or crowding it out of the fertile and desirable valleys into the bordering mountains. We find, then, in the Peguans, Cambodians, and Annamites the remains of prior settlements, expelled from their first seats by the intrusive Siamese and Burmese; and supporting indications are claimed to be discovered in the traditions of the various peoples, and the changes of location of their capitals. The southwestern parts of China, also, are occupied by tribes that appear to be plainly related with the Siamese and Burmese. North of Yun-nan, again, are the original seats of the Tibetans; and not far away, on the middle course of the Hoang-ho, is the theatre of the earliest Chinese history. It is the question, then, whether any linguistic signs of relationship are to be traced among the four peoples thus inferentially brought into geographic neighborhood.

Professor Kuhn here gives a sketch of the history of investigation among the transgangetic languages. A complete bibliography of the subject, prepared as an intended supplement to the present paper, he has decided to reserve for publication in another form. But he regards it as an unquestionable inference from the facts already made accessible, that the languages of southeastern Asia fall into two groups, corresponding with the division of the peoples stated above: namely, Annamite and Peguan and Cambodian on the one side, and the rest of the peninsular tongues, along with the Chinese and Tibetan, on the other. And the movements that have carried the Burmese and Siamese southward, and crowded the Tibetans westward, up the course of the higher Brahmaputra, behind the Himalayas, are, we are told, to be ascribed with probability to the growing extension of Chinese power. The northern group is divisible into an eastern and a western sub-group, Chinese-Siamese and Tibeto-Burman, the latter having on the whole the more primitive character. There are perplexing diversities in the way of more detailed classification; and to account for them, the author seems disposed to call in that *deum ex machina* of the classi-

fier in difficulties, the influence of neighboring tongues of a wholly different stock. Doubtless it would be better to let the problem simply pass as one yet unsolved.

The leading common characteristic of all these tongues is, as every one knows, their monosyllabism, and their lack of grammatical structure, the place of which is to a certain degree supplied by a fixed order of arrangement of the words composing a sentence. As regards lexical evidence, Professor Kuhn considers the common origin of the languages in each of the two chief groups above distinguished to be proved by the agreement of numerals within the group, and the diversity of the groups by their discordance with one another in the same respect. It must be confessed, however, that the comparative table of numerals in the northern group, given by him in a note, is very far from convincing; as, on the other hand, for reasons to which he himself alludes (and which are abundantly illustrated, for instance, in our Indian languages), discordant numerals need not be disproof of relationship. The laws of arrangement in the sentence are looser in the Tibeto-Burman sub-group, which also makes freer use of auxiliary particles; and the order followed is by no means the same in all the languages. But this difference, we are told, should not be regarded as having grown out of an original agreement, but rather out of a condition of greater freedom of arrangement; and this must be held to involve the former possession of a fuller grammatical apparatus. The suggestion is a very ingenious and significant one, and ought to be received with respectful attention, whether we are or are not ready at once to accept it. Our author proceeds to bring up facts from the various languages which may be regarded as giving it support. These are, in his opinion, manifold. The Chinese, in the first place, shows in some of its existing dialects and in its older phases remains of a greater fulness of phonetic form, especially having final consonants which the classical language has now lost. Similar facts are found in Siamese and Burman. But the most striking case is the Tibetan; the written forms of this language, dating from the seventh century, present numerous consonant combinations, now silent except in certain dialects, and indicating former possession by its words of more than the single syllable to which they are now restricted. In some cases, it is asserted, these affixes have an apparent grammatical character; and Professor Kuhn ventures to claim that in the other languages also are seen signs of fusion of a numeral particle with the proper numeral; but, as already stated, the comparative table he gives to show this is extremely unconvincing. He regards, however, the evidence he presents as absolutely demonstrating that the Chinese monosyllabism is no original one, but a result of phonetic decay. Such is well known to be the opinion of Lepsius, and of more than one other recent authority; and the indications must be confessed to point decidedly that way, although by no means so unmistakably as is here assumed.

So far, however, as regards the bearing of this new (asserted) aspect of the Chinese upon the question as to an original root-stage of language in general, the views of our author are open to criticism; and it is the more desirable to spend a few words upon the matter, inasmuch as there are others now-a-days who go even further than he in claiming that the root-theory breaks down hopelessly if the support of Chinese original monosyllabism is withdrawn from under it. No misapprehension could well be greater than this. A root,

in the first place, is not a phonetic element of a given extent; it is simply a significant element lacking any grammatical character, not admitting an analysis which demonstrates in it a formal part, marking it as a part of speech, a derivative from a more primitive word, or an inflectional form. A language composed only of such elements is a root-language, whatever be their length. Dissyllabism does not take away the radical character. There are languages enough to be found—for example, the ancient Egyptian and the modern Polynesian—of which the roots are in part or prevailing of more than one syllable. One may be strongly persuaded that the really ultimate roots of human speech were monosyllabic, and may devise theories to account for these longer radical entities, without yielding their radical nature. A combination, for example, of root with root makes only a root, unless one of the two enters, with a recognized and correspondent value, into a whole series of combinations, becoming thus a modifier to its fellow in each combination. The lost Chinese finals have yet to be shown to possess in this way a grammatical character, before they can be held to prove the Chinese not a language of roots. That the Chinese and its relatives "have run a long career of development, and grown worn with age, like the languages of Europe," is of course true. All existing languages, so far as we know, have behind them the same immense past, and a past of never-ending growth and change. Of this past, the period covered by the development of the Indo-European inflective system is probably only a small part; at any rate, he who imagines that in determining the Indo-European roots he has arrived at a point anywhere near the actual beginnings of human speech is immensely mistaken. But that the Chinese has never had a development even remotely like that of European tongues is sufficiently shown by its present condition, which is as unlike as possible to that of the monosyllabic part of English, wherein are lacking neither parts of speech nor derivatives nor inflections. If the Chinese, in growing out of a presumable original monosyllabism, acquired nothing in the way of structure of which it could retain the results when phonetically decayed, it is still a root-language, and almost or quite as good as ever for the use long made of it—namely, to show how a language destitute of grammatical structure can answer the needs even of a gifted and highly civilized people, and thus to take away all difficulty from the assumption that the first rude human beings made a language of roots serve their restricted purposes.

For the impregnable basis of the radicular theory, as has been repeatedly pointed out, is twofold. In the first place, its theoretic necessity; since anything devised and created by human beings, as part of their progress upward toward a state of culture, must have begun with what is simplest in its kind. To regard men as using from the start words made up of a radical part and a formative or grammatical part is precisely equivalent to regarding them as having begun to fight and to work with tools that had handles. He who does not see this has still to learn what language is and what has been its history. The other and completely correlative part of the basis is this: that, in the observable history of languages, we see abundant instances of the production of new formative elements, new signs of grammatical distinction; and that it is always and only by a reduction to formative or grammatical value of previously existing material elements of speech; whence a sound linguistic philology forces us to the inference that the same has been the case from the begin-

ning, and that the way to grammatical expression lies only through combination. With regard to this point, Professor Kuhn is in a very hopeful state, as appears from the concluding paragraphs of his paper. He ventures there to raise a word of protest against what he calls the "hitherto accepted philosophy of language." The latter, he says, is at a loss to find words of condemnation severe enough for languages guilty of mixing up material and form, by applying words of recognizably material content to those uses for which we provide by suffixes—as is to a great extent the case in the tongues of which he has been treating. He, on the contrary, is inclined to note their analogy with such elements in his own language as *-thum*, *-schaft*, *-heit*, *-bar*, all of them demonstrably material in origin. "Wherever," he adds, "we see suffixes come into being, they come in this way; and we may with some reason (*mit einigem Rechte*) infer that they have in general been thus originated." Here is a very encouraging bit of independence and good sense; and the author has only to go on boldly on the same track to escape altogether the shackles of the now prevalent philosophy of language in Germany, and to substitute for it the true scientific and historical method. That philosophy has really as little to do with the science of language as the Hegelian philosophy with geology or zoology. The former is all well in its way, but it does not stand upon the same plane with the other, and nothing but detriment and confusion can come of their mixture. The only justifiable scientific method, in the study of language as in every other branch of scientific inquiry, is to reason back from the known to the unknown. And the argument, as not long ago stated in the pages of this Journal (Vol. I, p. 337) runs thus: if in the historical periods of language we see formative elements made by the agglutination of independent material words, and do not see them made in any other way, and if the grammatical relations thus provided for are of the same kind, and not less difficult, than those expressed by the other formative elements whose history is beyond our ken, then it necessarily follows, not merely that we have "some reason" to regard the latter elements as having been made in the same way as the former, but that we have no reason to regard them as made in any other way. That is to say, this is the only, and the sufficient, method of explanation of the structural growth of language which the historical study of language has yet brought to light; any other, even concurrent one, must wait for admission until a historical basis has been found for it. Moreover, this kind of reduction of material elements to a formal value is only one division of the most pervading of all movements in the development of language. It is not easy to see why Professor Kuhn should have referred only to the suffixes of our European languages; their auxiliaries and form-words are a still closer parallel to the formative apparatus of less developed tongues, and involve processes of adaptation as gross and coarse as any that the latter can exhibit. Thus, to take the nearest example at hand, the German and English alike have a substantive verb, expressing the fundamental grammatical relation of predication, which is pieced together out of fragments of three verbs having the material senses of 'grow,' 'stay,' and 'sit' (or else 'breathe'): the Romanic tongues have patched in 'stand' instead of 'stay.' And to denote its temporal and modal relations, they employ various verbs traceable to the material senses of 'turn,' 'seize,' 'be big or strong,' 'select' (with a probable further background of 'surround'), 'be under penalty' (perhaps ultimately 'have committed a crime'),

and so on. Our phraseology, too, is crammed with examples of the same kind. What has the present accepted philosophy of language to say of such expressions, for example, as *es fällt mir ein* ('it falls in to me') or "it occurs to (*i. e.* 'runs against') me," for that extremely familiar but also transcendently mysterious act of framing a sudden conception? And is not all our intellectual and moral language made up of such grossly material elements? Of their grossness, the mind that uses them is totally unconscious, and the intellectual action that underlies them is alike in all those who employ their unending variety. To say *heap-man* instead of *men* or *Männer*, to us who have the latter forms, is of an amusing rudeness; so would be *I shall have been*, if employed with etymological understanding of its elements by one accustomed to say *fuero*; but to one whose habitual expression it has become, the sense of the grammatical relation, of plurality and so forth, is in either case just as pure and as integral as is that of the synthetic form to its user. Those who have to learn a tongue of ruder structure do not find the character of their mental apprehensions degraded by it; the process of thought is the same with either instrument. To get at the kernel of a nut, one may with nearly equal advantage avail himself of a rough stone, a polished hammer, or a patent nut-cracking machine; and while we may admire the superior ingenuity of the last, we do not fail to recognize in all alike the essentially human faculty of adapting means to ends, nor to acknowledge that the remote ancestors of those who now have machines possessed nothing better than stones; and we should especially laugh at any who maintained that the metal in their machines was never rude mineral that had to be dug out of the dirty ground. But this is what is virtually done by those who insist that in their languages the apparatus of formal expression has been always and only formal. In direct opposition to them, it is to be maintained that in no language does anything formal exist that was not first material; investigation, experience, and sound anthropologic theory all unite to show this; and there is nothing against it but prejudice and pride. Our views of the history of language, in order to be defensible and abiding, must be made to fit into our general anthropology, as a consistent part of it; for language is simply one of the various acquisitions by which man has become what he is. Now what can we suppose to have been the mental condition and capacity of men who have not yet possessed themselves of speech? Certainly not superior to that of the comparatively cultivated races in the more recent stages of their history, but rather the contrary; we cannot help believing that there has been a gradual advance in intellectual grasp and reach, partly as a consequence of the gradual elaboration of speech. It would be, then, of the utmost degree of strangeness if in primitive times a loftier and freer mode of language-making was within reach than we now find attainable by ourselves; if those items of formal expression which in the period over which our observations extend have had to be slowly wrought out and adapted to their purpose from the general material of speech, could be struck off out of hand by the earliest speech-makers. Yet we have this palpable absurdity involved in the language-theories of a variety of schools: of those who hold that certain languages are "form-languages" and others not; or that speech began with sentences, which gradually begat words by a fissiparous process; or that pronouns are the endings of verbs, which have dropped off and set up an independent existence; or that the founders of each race of men produced the various exist-

ing languages complete "at a single stroke"—and so on through the whole list of *a priori* systems, which are saved from general and utter condemnation only by the too prevalent substitution of empty speculations for the scientific method of induction from facts.

Our author's concluding opinion, that we are not to infer mental infirmity in the races possessing these peculiar and structurally impoverished tongues, is to be received with unquestioning assent. Every race is entitled to be judged by the totality of its mental products, not by the capacity which it has exhibited in a single direction of mental activity; and no reasonable man will deny to the unaided originators of a culture like the Chinese a place in the front rank of humanity. But the skill and effect with which they are handled does not save the tongues themselves from the reproach of rudimentariness; and whatever eminence the Chinese and Tibetans may have attained in philosophy must be said to be in spite of their speech rather than by its aid. To extol the logicalness of a language of roots can hardly fail to imply against one that has parts of speech and inflections the charge of being in some measure illogical.

W. D. W.

Old-Latin Biblical Texts. No. I. The Gospel according to Matthew. From the St. Germain MS (*g*₁), edited by JOHN WORDSWORTH, M. A., Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture.

This volume is the first instalment of a series which is apparently intended to deal exhaustively with the difficult question of the relations between the Vulgate and those Latin versions of the New Testament which are earlier than the days of Jerome; and it will be welcomed by all students of the New Testament, not only on account of the access which its collations will give to MSS either inaccessible to the majority of scholars, or, worse still, misrepresented by previous editors, but also as an indication of the progress which Professor Wordsworth is making with the promised edition of the Vulgate which he has undertaken for the delegates of the Clarendon Press.

It is probably on account of the neglect with which this celebrated MS (*g*₁) has been treated by the present generation of scholars, that Wordsworth has decided to give it the first place in the series of so-called Old-Latin texts; and he points out that the majority of those who have used the text have employed the unreliable collation of Martianay, to the enumeration of whose errors Wordsworth devotes an appendix of nearly 12 pages for the Gospel of St. Matthew alone. It almost seems as if collators were born, not made.

The MS is generally referred to the ninth century, and is the second volume of a Bible of which the first was lost, according to the editor, between the years 1540 and 1680. It was formerly in the library of the Abbey of St. Germain des Prés, near Paris, and is now in the National Library (Fonds Latin 11553). From the Abbey it, of course, derives its name and notation *g*₁, *i. e.* the first of the Italic MSS of St. Germain. This notation we are sorry to see that Wordsworth proposes to change so that it reads, in the volume under consideration, *G*₁, and will do so in the forthcoming edition of the Vulgate. A curse worse than that of Shakespere's epitaph might be invoked upon the heads of those who alter, unnecessarily, the notation of New Testa-